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Letter dated 6 February 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the outcome of talks between the Government of Burundi and the FNL, held in the Netherlands, issued by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland
to the United Nations

04-23918 (E) 130204

Annex to the letter dated 6 February 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the outcome of talks between the Government of Burundi and the FNL, held in the Netherlands, issued on 27 January 2004 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the outcome of the talks between the delegation led by the President of Burundi, Domitien Ndayizeye, and the delegation of the FNL, led by Ibrahim Ntakirutimana, held in the Netherlands from 18-21 January 2004 and which were facilitated by the Government of the Netherlands.

The European Union is pleased that the talks took place in a constructive and cordial atmosphere and resulted in a recognition of the need to end violence in Burundi and a willingness to continue the dialogue, with a view to reaching ultimate agreement and inclusion of the FNL in the Burundian State institutions.

The European Union equally welcomes the proposed establishment of an International Commission of Enquiry into the tragic murder of the Apostolic Nuncio to Burundi, Mgr Michael Courtney, on 29 December 2003.

The European Union urges both sides to continue to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict and reiterates its willingness to assist them in their efforts. It is important that the proposed follow-up meeting between President Ndayizeye and the FNL take place at the earliest opportunity.

The European Union calls upon the Government of Burundi and the FNL to cease all hostilities with immediate effect and urges the Government of Burundi and the FNL to conclude a ceasefire agreement as soon as possible, as immediate confidence-building measures in the interest of the Burundian population.

The European Union also reconfirms its readiness to support actively Burundi in its reconstruction efforts, which remain severely hampered by the ongoing violence in the absence of an all-inclusive peace agreement.

The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.